

WILTSHIRE POLICE



Via Email



Police Headquarters

London Road
DEVIZES
Wiltshire
SN10 2DN

disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk

Date 23/01/2024

Our ref **FOI 2023/1133**

Reply contact name is:

Dear *****,

I write in connection with your request for information, dated 24/11/2023, concerning Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Automation of Digital Forensic analysis of evidential sources / devices.

I am required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to handle all requests in a manner that is blind as to the identity and motives of the requestor. Any information released as a response to a request is regarded as being published and therefore in the public domain without caveat.

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted with South West Forensics and the policies officer of Wiltshire Police.

Your request for information has now been considered and it is not possible to meet your requirements in full.

You wrote with **Response:**

Please could I request any and all information that is held by your organisation in relation to the use of Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Automation of Digital Forensic analysis of evidential sources / devices.

This request extends to, but is not limited to, any:

- Policies
- Procedures
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Use cases
- Information
- Decisions

Please could I also request any information that is held in relation to any of the following questions:

- How is AI and/or Machine Learning incorporated into Digital Forensics within your organisation or within investigations that are conducted? **We do not use machine learning tools in Forensics currently – No information held.**

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- Are there any specific AI or ML-based tools which are used by your organisation in the conducting of digital forensic examinations or triage? **As above - No information held.**
- Are there any frameworks, guidance documents, or other frameworks against which any digital tool is judged before it can be used within digital forensic examinations? **No information held**
- How are tools that are used accredited for use? **No information held**
- What metrics are used for that accreditation? **No information held**
- Is there any ongoing research or development occurring in relation to the use of automated tools within digital forensic investigations within your organisation? **South West Forensics, which incorporates Avon & Somerset, Devon & Cornwall, Dorset and Wiltshire police are currently running a pilot. The process will include the review of existing SOP's for changes that maybe required should we adopt the technology.**
- Is your organisation testing or conducting any research into the use of such tools? **See above**
- Does your organisation outsource any such activities to third parties, such as technology or forensic companies? **As above – South West Forensics**
- Do any of these third parties, if used, make use of automation through ML or AI? **South West Forensics do not use machine learning tools in Forensics currently.**
- Is there anything in any form of agreement that would preclude the use of such tools? **No information held**
- How are tools that third parties use accredited or audited? **No information held**
- Would your organisation have any concerns about the use of such tools? **No information held**

The reason for this request is that I am currently undertaking academic research into the use and validity of Digital Forensic automation using such systems, therefore this request also includes any information that could be reasonably be expected to assist with that goal and objective.

This request is not for any personal data, confidential data, or any specific information about any investigation or case. I am interested in Police consideration, use of, and policies in relation to the use of this technology

Further information can be found on Wiltshire police's previously published responses, please see the following links:

[foi-2023-756_artificial_intelligence.pdf \(wiltshire.police.uk\)](#)

[foi-2022-059_csam-artificial-intelligence-machine-learning-software.pdf \(wiltshire.police.uk\)](#)

[foi-2022-707_predictive-mapping-systems.pdf \(wiltshire.police.uk\)](#)

[foi-2021-868-use-of-ai-csam.pdf \(wiltshire.police.uk\)](#)

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires Wiltshire Police, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this letter acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request.

Exemption applied:

S21 Section 21: Information accessible to applicant by other means.

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(1) Information which is reasonably accessible to the applicant otherwise than under section 1 is exempt information.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)—

(a) information may be reasonably accessible to the applicant even though it is accessible only on payment, and

(b) information is to be taken to be reasonably accessible to the applicant if it is information which the public authority or any other person is obliged by or under any enactment to communicate (otherwise than by making the information available for inspection) to members of the public on request, whether free of charge or on payment.

Wiltshire Police would like to thank you for the interest that you have shown in the Force.

Yours sincerely,

Force Disclosure Decision Maker

Wiltshire Police offers a re-examination of your case under its review procedure.



Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Wiltshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing to the:

Force Disclosure Unit
Wiltshire Police Headquarters,
London Road, Devizes,
Wiltshire,
SN10 2DN

Email at disclosure@wiltshire.police.uk.

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Force Disclosure Unit within 20 working days of the Force's response to the original FoI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing to include confirmation of the reasons for the review. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker, who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Force Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The Independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision Maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following

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the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545 700
Fax: 01625 524 510
Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Please note that the ICO's offices will be closed for the foreseeable future and are therefore unable to receive correspondence via post.

If you should wish you contact them, please visit <https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>